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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1385
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS BUJUMBURA 000084

SIPDIS

USDA/FAS FOR STEVE FROGETT
OES FOR DANIELLE WOOD
EEB/TPP/MTAA/ABT FOR MARCELLA SZYMANSKI

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [TBIO](#) [KPAO](#) [BY](#)
SUBJECT: AGMIN OPEN TO NON-RESTRICTIVE BIOSAFETY APPROACH

REF: STATE 11910

¶1. In a February 19 meeting with EconOff to discuss the Ministry of Agriculture's stance on proposed rules to be debated under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (reftel), Pascal Ndayiragije, Director of Vegetable and Animal Products for the AgMin's research institute (known by its French acronym ISABU):
-- said that he was not aware of the February 23-27 meeting in Mexico City to continue negotiations on the proposed rules, and did not think Burundi would send a representative;
-- explained that the government had no set policy concerning the transboundary movement of living modified organisms (LMOs);
-- agreed that it would be an extreme position to consider all LMOs as "ultra-hazardous" materials, and said that each LMO should be evaluated on its own merits;
-- acknowledged the importance of LMOs to African agriculture, and mentioned ISABU's own efforts to introduce virus-resistant varieties of cassava; and
-- said AgMin personnel needed training on how to effectively address biosafety issues.
Wagner